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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/783,031	02/15/2001	Tatsuo Tateno	2185-0514P-SP	5720
2292	7590	08/28/2002	EXAMINER	
BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH PO BOX 747 FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747			TOOMER, CEPHIA D	
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1714		10		
DATE MAILED: 08/28/2002				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary**Application No.**

09/783,031

Applicant(s)

TATENO ET AL.

Examiner

Cephia D. Toomer

Art Unit

1714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on the amendment filed June 4, 2002.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1 and 3-15 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 3 and 4 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1 and 5-15 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 8 .

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

This Office action is in response to the amendment filed June 4, 2002 in which claim 1 was amended and claim 2 was canceled.

The 102(b) rejection of claim 1 as anticipated by GB 795573 is withdrawn in view of the amendment to the claim.

The 103 rejection of claim 1 as unpatentable over Ullmann is withdrawn in view of applicant's arguments.

The 103 rejection of claim 3-15 as unpatentable over Stern and Cahen is withdrawn in view of applicant's arguments.

The 103 rejection of claims 3-15 as unpatentable over Stern and GB 795573 is withdrawn in view of applicant's arguments

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(e) the invention was described in-

(1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effect under this subsection of a national application published under section 122(b) only if the international application designating the United States was published under Article 21(2)(a) of such treaty in the English language; or
(2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that a patent shall not be deemed filed in the United States for the purposes of this subsection based on the filing of an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a).

2. Claims 1 and 5-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (a) or (e) as being anticipated by Sasaki (US 6,187,939).

Sasaki teaches a method for preparing fatty acid esters and fuel comprising fatty acid esters, wherein fats and oils with an alcohol are reacted in the presence of a catalyst under a condition wherein at least one of the components will be in a supercritical state (see abstract; col. 5, lines 1-5). Sasaki teaches that the catalyst may be an alkali or alkaline earth carbonate (see col. 5, lines 11-16). The fats may be waste oils (see claims 8 and 9). The esters may be used as diesel fuel, fuel additives or as a lubrication base oil (see col. 6, lines 6-10). Sasaki exemplifies reaction temperatures far in excess of 260 C (see examples).

Accordingly, Sasaki teaching all the material limitations of the claims, anticipates the claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over ES 2124166 for the reasons of record.

Applicant argues that ES fails to teach any criticality in the temperature range or that at least one of the oil or fat or alcohol is in the supercritical state. Applicant argues that the data demonstrates unexpected results when the temperature is above 260 C.

ES teaches that the transesterification reaction may be carried out at a temperature of 260 C. Since he teaches alcohols and fats that encompass those of the

present invention, it would be reasonable to expect that one of the components would reach a supercritical state. Applicant does not provide any examples wherein the reaction temperature is 260 C. All exemplified temperatures are 300 C +. The examiner cannot ascertain from the data if unexpected results are obtained.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 3 and 4 are allowed. The prior art fails to teach a transesterification process meeting the required supercritical state in the presence of a nickel-containing solid catalyst.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cephia D. Toomer whose telephone number is 703-308-2509. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vasu Jagannathan can be reached on 703-306-2777. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9310 for regular communications and 703-872-9310 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.



Cephia D. Toomer
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1714

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August 24, 2002